



On your marks

Here are two simple ideas for praying linked to the whole story of the Bible. Each part of God's big story has something in it to help us discover more about our own story of faith. These prayers can be used in a small group setting or as a prayer activity in church when all ages are present in worship. This exercise is not only about prayer but can also help your group gain some sense of the content and flow of the Bible story.

Get set

For the first prayer idea you will need a Bible for each child in your group or for each member of the congregation to hold. The words that are repeated should be rehearsed first and could be up on a screen in church for all to read. In the first prayer allow time for everyone to find the relevant section of the Bible for each prayer. A suggested page number may help some. The second prayer is designed for use in church and needs seven good readers.

Go!

1. Let us bring our story alongside God's story as we pray together.

Everyone should hold a Bible in their hands and say together:

Lord God, help us to listen to your words

Now open the Bible somewhere in the first book—Genesis. Pause and then say: *Lord God, help us to hear you speaking in the stories of Abraham, Jacob, Isaac and Joseph.*

Next, open the Bible somewhere in the second book—Exodus. Pause and then say:

Lord God, help us to hear you speaking in the stories of Moses and the great escape.

Open the Bible somewhere in one of the books of Kings. Pause and then say:

Lord God, help us to hear you speaking in the stories of King David and King Solomon.

Open the Bible in one of the books of the prophets. Pause and then say:

Lord God, help us to hear you speaking in the words of your special messengers.

Open the Bible somewhere in one of the four gospels. Pause and then say:

Lord God, help us to hear you speaking through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

Open the Bible among the letters at the end. Pause and then say:

Lord God, help us to hear you speaking through the letters that were written to the first churches.

Everyone should now be encouraged to hold the Bible close to his or her heart. Pause and then say:

Lord God, help us to hear you speaking to us today and to do what you tell us to do. Amen.



2. Here is another way of praying with the Bible, which is suitable for all-age worship. There are suggested actions to accompany this prayer.

The following line is one, which everyone says together in response to words from a leader. In church the leader's words could be spoken by various people, including children, who stand in different parts of the church. Each should hold a Bible open at the relevant section about which they are praying.

Lord, help us to hear your voice and stand firm for you.

(Actions to accompany this line could be: a hand beside one ear and then both hands by your side as you stamp firmly on the ground.)

Together: ***Lord, help us to hear your voice and stand firm for you.***

Leader 1: Lord of all, we believe you are a God who speaks to us.

Together: ***Lord, help us to hear your voice and stand firm for you.***

Leader 2: You spoke to Abraham, calling him to step out in faith on an unknown way.

Together: ***Lord, help us to hear your voice and stand firm for you.***

Leader 3: You spoke to Moses, calling him to a special work of rescue against all the odds.

Together: ***Lord, help us to hear your voice and stand firm for you.***

Leader 4: You spoke to David, keeping him safe in times of danger when all seemed lost.

Together: ***Lord, help us to hear your voice and stand firm for you.***

Leader 5: You spoke to the prophets, inspiring them to speak up for truth when darkness threatened.

Together: ***Lord, help us to hear your voice and stand firm for you.***

Leader 6: You spoke to Peter, James and John when you said of Jesus, 'This is my Son, listen to him.'

Together: ***Lord, help us to hear your voice and stand firm for you.***

Leader 7: You spoke to Paul as he shared the good news of the gospel.

Together: ***Lord, help us to hear your voice and stand firm for you.***

Leader 1: We bring your story alongside our story and ask for:

Faith that stays strong



Action: hands together as if in prayer

Grace that holds us safe

Action: hands open to receive

Power that is made perfect in weakness

Action: hands clenched as a fist

Love that enables us to forgive others

Action: hands crossed across the chest

And **the fullness of your Holy Spirit**, so that we might know how to live out our trust in you.

Action: hands raised up high

Together: ***Lord, help us to hear your voice and stand firm for you.***